

October 31, 2000

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED AIR TOXICS REGULATION FOR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a rule to ensure reductions of toxic air pollutants from municipal solid waste landfills.
- ! Air toxics are those pollutants known, or suspected to, cause cancer or other adverse health effects in humans. The air toxics to be reduced by today's proposed rule include, but are not limited to: toluene; benzene; xylenes; vinyl chloride; and ethyl benzene.
- ! The proposed rule builds on the collection and control requirements established in existing emission guidelines and new source performance standards by adding new reporting requirements that will help ensure that any violations of established operating parameters will be corrected in a timely fashion.
- ! This proposal will also require that municipal landfills have a plan in place to address conditions of startup, shutdown, and malfunction of their landfill gas collection-and- control systems.
- ! The proposed rule affects the same municipal landfills nationwide that currently are affected by existing emission guidelines and new source performance standards.
- ! EPA will take public comment for 60 days starting on the publication date in the *Federal Register*. EPA will hold a public hearing if requested within 30 days of *Register* publication.

BENEFITS/COST

- ! The proposed rule ensures reductions of air toxics from municipal landfills, while providing flexibility to the landfill industry. The proposed rule is based on existing emission guidelines and new source performance standards, both of which require the best available landfill gas collection and control technology known.
- ! By requiring continuous monitoring of control devices, plans for startup, shutdown and malfunction and semiannual reporting, EPA can ensure that toxic air pollutant emissions are

reduced to the greatest extent possible. The average annual operating and maintenance costs for industry's recordkeeping and reporting are estimated at \$13,128 with an estimated total annual cost to industry of \$2.1 million.

- ! EPA anticipates no capital costs for sources complying with this proposed rule, because the rule does not require industry to install additional landfill controls.

WHAT THE RULE REQUIRES

- ! If a gas collection and control system is in operation at a municipal landfill subject to this proposal, sources will have to prepare and implement a written plan that describes in detail the procedures for operating and maintaining the gas collection-and-control systems and the continuous monitoring system during periods of startup, shutdown and malfunction. EPA's proposal will also require that municipal landfills report incidents in which the startup/shutdown/malfunction plan was not followed.
- ! These proposed standards will require landfills to monitor control devices continuously to ensure compliance with the operating conditions for landfill gas control systems.
- ! Under this proposal, municipal landfill operators would have to submit a compliance report every six months. This report, required annually by the emission guidelines and the new source performance standards, pertains to the value and length of time that control devices operate in out-of-bounds conditions, the duration of periods when the landfill gas stream is diverted from the control device(s), the location of areas that exceed methane concentration limits, and the dates of installation and location of each added well or collection system expansion.

BACKGROUND

- ! The Clean Air Act of 1990 requires EPA to identify source categories that emit one or more listed 188 toxic air pollutants. Municipal solid waste landfills emit approximately 30 of the 188 listed toxic air pollutants, including but not limited to, toluene, benzene, xylenes, vinyl chloride, and ethyl benzene.
- ! For major sources within each source category, the law requires EPA to develop standards that restrict emissions to levels consistent with the lowest-emitting (also called best-performing) plants.
- ! Major sources are those that emit 10 tons a year or more of a single air toxic or 25 tons a year or more of a combination of air toxics. Approximately 10 percent of landfills in existence since

1987 are capable of emitting toxic air pollutants at sufficient levels to be classified as major sources prior to the installation of the collection and control systems required by existing emission guidelines and new source performance standards.

- ! Area sources are any source that is not a major source. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to list those sources that represent 90 percent of the area source emissions of 30 “urban air toxics.” The 30 urban air toxics are those that present the greatest threat to public health in the largest number of urban areas. Municipal solid waste landfills emit approximately 13 of the 30 hazardous air pollutants in urban areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ! Interested parties can download the proposed rule from EPA's web site at: www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg. For additional information, contact Michele Laur of the EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5256 or by e-mail at laur.michele@epa.gov.
- ! EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The address is: www.epa.gov/oar/.